

# THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

*A Quarterly Journal of Philosophy*

JANUARY, 1931

## FREUD AND AESTHETICS

Jules de la Vaissière

## ADDISON'S ROMANTIC AESTHETIC

Calvert Alexander

## HOW PHILOSOPHY CAME TO ROME

Cyril Vollert

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## FREUD AND AESTHETICS

JULES DE LA VAISSIÈRE

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IN 1926 Freud wrote: "We do not find it at all desirable that psychoanalysis be swallowed up by medicine, nor that it find a last resting-place in treatises on psychiatry. Psychoanalysis is deserving of a better lot than that. Inasmuch as it is a psychology of depths, the doctrine of the psychical unconscious, psychoanalysis can become indispensable to all sciences treating of the origins of human institutions, such as art, religion and social order."<sup>1</sup> A psychoanalyst recoils before no question of a psychological nature, no matter how complex or lofty it may be.<sup>2</sup> For Freud and his school, the more problems are controlled by the numerous mechanisms of the interior life, the more fruitful becomes the intervention of their method. Moreover, no one ought to be surprised that psychoanalysts challenge with a marked complacency everything that deals with the study of aesthetics in art

and literature; in recent years alone, their works on matters of the kind have well exceeded the hundred mark.

Psychoanalysis does not tell us what the artistic gift is; it observes a respectful silence, too, regarding the origin of the poetic gift;<sup>3</sup> the essence of these functions is not in the jurisdiction of psychoanalysis, no more than is the demonstrating of the technical processes of their work. Psychoanalysis is in no way a normative science nor for that matter is it even, strictly speaking, an objective science. What it aims at is subjectivity in the lowest depths of psychism, the quest of original psychological functions. More especially, in aesthetic activity, psychoanalysis aims at finding out the temperament of the artist and the instinctive operations working within him; it accomplishes this by investigating into the mutual relations that exist between his impressions of life, his fortuitous vicissitudes and his works. In short, psychoanalysis wants to find out what it is the artist presents that is so eternally human. To attain this end, psychoanalysis will be helped greatly

<sup>1</sup> *Die Frage der Lainanalyse*, 1926. (Fr. trans. Gallimard, p. 235).

<sup>2</sup> A general study on Freud's psychoanalytic psychology will appear soon in the *Archives de Philosophie*; these pages contain certain extracts.

<sup>3</sup> *Das Interesse an der Psychoanalyse*, *Scientia*, XIV, pp. 247-248.



by the results already obtained for dreams, neuroses and for the phases of sexual evolution.<sup>4</sup>

Freud maintains that the majority of dreams are the disguised realization of a repressed urge; it is precisely the pushing of unconscious desires which puts the aesthetic activity into play. Our hidden desires are sometimes transferred to the ordinary events of daily life, by what may be called reveries.<sup>5</sup> Knowing only too well the imperious nature of social censorship, the uninitiated does not draw any profit from these hidden desires; the artist, however, after laying hold of them, embellishes them in an effort to disguise their specious origin and to veil their too-personal character, else others would not be able to take any pleasure in them. The sculptor models his matter, the poet his verbal expressions of things with enough perfection to represent themselves as being outside of what they imagine and thus to place themselves in possession of the object of their desires. If, like the dreamer, the artist does not believe in the reality of the phantasm itself, nevertheless he places before himself a reality far superior to that of the dreamer, because people other than himself are going to see his reality, are going to touch it and hear it. Corresponding to these analogies on dreams, one ought to await further works dealing with the same processes of the unconscious: dramatization, condensation, displacement.<sup>6</sup>

The analogy existing between the artist and the neurotic is likewise very striking: "The artist is an 'introvert' and touches quite closely upon the neurotic. Animated by desires and tendencies extremely strong, he aims at conquering honors, riches, power, glory and love of women."<sup>7</sup> Incapable of realising his ambitions from without, he concentrates the energies of his 'libido' on his imaginative life which, in turn, would readily lead him to neurosis, were not his nature, by way of retaliation, endowed with a marked facility for raising this 'libido' to a higher scale. Since the artist and the neurotic are obliged to renounce the objective satisfaction of their instincts, namely at the moment when their desires make that difficult passage from the principle of pleasure to the principle of reality, they allow themselves to fall back again upon their imaginative worlds. The artist, however, taking foot once again in the objective, becomes as it were, a "citizen of the intermediate plain existing between the reality, which is incapable of realizing his desires, and the world of phantasm which actually realizes them."

The constraint of censure is thus conquered and the artist "finds a personal satisfaction which he, in turn, communicates by the medium of his work to others who

<sup>4</sup> *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci*, Sigmund Freud, p. 212. (Fr. trans. Gillimard, Paris).

<sup>5</sup> *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*, Sigmund Freud, (Fr. trans. Payot, Paris, p. 391).

<sup>6</sup> *Autobiographie dans die Medizin der Gegenwart in Selbst-darstellungen*, t. IV, pp. 1-50. Fr. trans. Mavie et la Psychoanalyse, Gallimard, pp. 99-103).

<sup>7</sup> *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*, Sigmund Freud, (Fr. trans. Payot, Paris, p. 391).

suffer from the same desire as he." If art does not entirely cure, it at least relieves and refines the energies of the artist; it frees him from the germs of neurosis.

Art very clearly manifests its relations with the first years of the psychological life. Does not a child conduct himself much like the poet when with a great interest he disposes the objects of his universe? Of course, the child does not go as far as the poet, to the extent of producing the objects upon which he rests his activity; the child finds them already made. Moreover, the child cannot strip his amusements of that personal character which keeps these amusements, precisely, from being of interest for everyone. Nevertheless, in the "narcissic" phase, between "autoerotism" and the objective phase, it is truly his infantile phantasy which he realizes in the order given to the objects for his greater satisfaction.<sup>8</sup>

Certain dramatic subjects have powerfully inspired poets and very particularly moved spectators; this is so because they effectively expressed an important law of psychical evolution. For example, the Oedipus of Sophocles and the Hamlet of Shakespeare, in order to give the spectators' tendencies a certain disguised satisfaction, stir up these tendencies repressed at the moment when, as children they transferred their "libido" from their mothers to identify themselves with their fathers; consequently, Oedipus and Hamlet find a resonance in a region of the unconscious which is especially rich in emotional dynamics.

In a treatise on Leonardo da Vinci, Freud employed all of his virtuosity to show the enormous influence the childhood of the great artist played on his talents and on his works. As result of his illegitimate birth, da Vinci lived separated from his father probably up to the time he was five years of age, when he was taken into his paternal home and there submitted to the care of his stepmother. In his scientific writings, da Vinci has also included a datum on his childhood: "One of the first recollections of my infancy is, when still in my cradle, a vulture came to me and after opening my mouth with his tail proceeded to strike me with it between my lips"<sup>9</sup>—pure imagination which, according to Freud, corresponds rather to a phantasm made up in later life and unduly thrown back on his infancy. From these data and from others of lesser importance, psychoanalytic laws infer what is the most particular characteristic of this eminent painter's genius.

Possessing as da Vinci did, an ardent love for his mother—and this love, let me add, was even heightened by reason of his being abandoned by his father—characterized very quickly the ensemble of his infantile psychological activity, thus given at an early age to an intense sexual curiosity. Any steps he may have taken in this matter were certainly refined during the period of repression into an instinct of investigation. Freud adds: "Such traits,

<sup>8</sup> *Der Dichter und das Fantasieren*, Sammlung Kleiner Schriften, 2te, Folge, p. 197.

<sup>9</sup> *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci*, (Fr. trans. Gallimard, Paris, p. 66).



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## A Bicentenary

ONE year from next month the American people will suspend their manifold occupations for a brief period, to pay homage to the man whom they rightly venerate as their father. In view, not only of his own worth as a leader in an age of great men, but especially of his heroic labors and sacrifices for his country, the benefits of which we have continued to enjoy for a century and a half, it is no less expedient than fitting that we should externalize our appreciation of the man with appropriate ceremonial. It is for the leaders of thought, the spokesmen of the people, to see to it that our nation-wide celebration shall not degenerate into mere sentimentality, that mere popular enthusiasm shall not usurp the place of a sincere and intelligent appreciation of Washington and all he represents. His intrinsic worth, and, above all, his relation to the American people, demand a comprehension and a just appreciation of the principles and ideals of government and society which actuated and supported him through his long struggle with his opponents. What happier prelude could there be to his bicentenary than a diligent inquiry into these same principles?

Men of serious thought today have observed an increasing ignorance among the people concerning the founda-

tions of our government. The country, to a large extent, has broken away from the safe anchorage of its early ideals. Consequently, there is need of a diligent search into Washington's conception of the fundamental elements of our democracy. In a nation such as ours, ignorance among the people regarding their own government must be combated as a deadly peril. Washington himself realized this when he said: "In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." As a counteraction to ignorance, and widespread neglect of the duties of government, an intelligent study and exposition of the ideals of the first man of our country—of his philosophy of government and the character which it gave to this, our government, in its infancy—would be beneficial. Material for the study is ready at hand in all his writings, statements and actions. The need for it is all the more imperative in view of the growth of communism and other false political theories which are as highly impracticable as they are ethically unsound. Let us have rather an increasing knowledge of Washington's outlook on the nature of the state, the sources, as well as limitations of its power, its relation to public welfare, to education and morality. These and many allied matters are of perennial interest; they are of even more vital concern today. Might not those who are charged with the problems of education derive profit from a thoughtful perusal of Washington's views on the relation between morality and public prosperity? In his Farewell Address he says, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked: Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." If religious principles are not imbibed together with intellectual development, when shall they be acquired?

As in education, so in other fields of public interest, a thoughtful study of Washington should prove a lasting benefit. It was his own wish that we recur at times to the spirit manifested in his public action. "In offering to you these counsels of an old affectionate friend, I dare not hope that they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish . . . But, if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good, that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to war against the mischief of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism, this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated."



# ADDISON'S ROMANTIC AESTHETIC

CALVERT ALEXANDER  
Saint Louis University

THERE has been a great deal of public repining of late over the present status of modern literature. Certain High Churchmen of the romantic movement (including a few Humanists) have turned from tear-stained copies of Shelley and Blake to the works of Gertrude Stein and Theodore Dreiser with the announcement that a blight has fallen upon a great literary revival—that romanticism is in a state of decay. Recriminations are hurled at the moderns for having corrupted the movement, and when critics like Edmund Wilson and Rebecca West fail to see the point, and insist that the productions of James Joyce, Proust and the Mencken school are not the withered flower of romanticism but the movement in full bloom, there is a general throwing up of hands and sporadic cries of "perversion."

For the consolation of those who find themselves drawn to the side of Mr. Wilson and Miss West in the controversy, it may be said that the recent researches into the philosophy behind romanticism would tend to absolve the moderns from the charge of having corrupted the movement, or from having in any way departed from its underlying principles. They are quite correct in asserting that modern romanticism is not decadent. For the word *decadent* denotes a process of decline from a state of greater perfection, whereas it is quite evident that never before has romanticism existed in a purer state, never have artists experienced conditions more favorable to the whole aesthetic of the movement, and never have works been produced which so faithfully reflect the inner spirit of the revival, as those of today. Whatever may be said about decadence of these as works of art, they are certainly not products of decadent romanticism. They represent romanticism triumphant, unshackled, and at length arrived at the highest point in its evolutionary career.

When the pretty little egg we have hopefully mothered hatches out into a buzzard we may be disappointed that it is not a lark, but we do not accuse nature of decadence. Our knowledge of embryology is at fault. So, one thinks, there should be an end to these charges of corruption when Blake, Shelley, and Byron have such modern progeny. Had we been less enamoured of the surface appeal of these embryonic romanticists, and more attentive to the metaphysics below the shell—to the artistic theory determining the epigenesis of the beast, we would not now be obliged to cover up our error in judgment with the cry of "decadence."

For it was inevitable that romanticism should turn out as it has; its destiny was fixed from the beginning by the philosophical doctrines that, in the 18th Century, went to constitute its aesthetic. All the determinants that would come to complete maturity only in our own day were present then and clearly discernable, needing only the

proper environmental conditions to ripen. Thus as early as the year 1712 we find Joseph Addison espousing the "escape mechanism" theory of literature, and stranding the artist on the bleak island of the ego by his denial of the extra-mental existence of Beauty; forty years later Edmund Burke is stating much the same theory of the artistic emotions with which Freud in our own day has enriched the artistic imagination; and the century closes with Archibald Alison's charming exposition of the "stream of thought" doctrine in art. These are but a few high spots chosen from that transitional century of romantic birth which someone in an incoherent moment called "the age of prose and reason." There is nothing prosaic about its aesthetic: it is quite flaming. All the forces of philosophical revolt that had been gathering since the break-up of the Renaissance stirred the minds of those who took it upon themselves to help form the new artistic theory. And they were not a handful. Every important philosophical figure from Hutcheson to Hume, and many who were neither philosophers nor important hastened to contribute something to the romantic cauldron. And as to "reason," well, reason had been moribund in England since the advent of the Hobbes-Locke psychology. The spirit of the age was decidedly anti-rational, and the aesthetic it bequeathed to the 19th Century was crammed with damnations of the intellect and apostrophes to the senses and infra-rational feelings.

To one familiar with the spirit of the 18th Century aesthetic it seems quite remarkable that the following period gave us nothing closer to Joyce and Proust than William Blake. This, however, would have been to expect a prodigy of artistic biology like Minerva springing full-armed from the brow of Jupiter. Environmental conditions were present to retard the growth of the new doctrines; there was a remnant of Christianity, the British veneration for ivy-covered conventions, the admiration for the Greek and Roman classics based on a different aesthetic, and finally the innate common sense that seems to be the heritage of all men whether they be in the 5th or the 19th Century. We shall look in vain among the aesthetic writings of the 18th Century for a complete statement of the orthodox romantic doctrine, like, for instance, that recently written by Prof. C. J. Ducasse of Brown University<sup>1</sup> in which we have the romantic gospel in all its chaste beauty with no admixture of foreign elements. In Addison, Burke, Hume and Alison there are many strange bedfellows; associationism and veneration for Aristotle, admiration of the classics and contempt for the psychology on which they are based, love of the spiritual qualities of Vergil and denial of the spirituality of the soul, etc., etc. So, too, there were no perfect romantics among the

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Art*, Dial Press, 1929.



19th Century English artists. Wordsworth, Blake, Byron, Swinburne, Pater were straddlers, who, accepting the general principles upon which the new aesthetic was based, were either too timid or too illogical to carry the whole program into practice. Many years must pass, many ideals must be shattered, a new race must be born whose chief virtue would be a certain Spartan logic, before the true emancipated romantic would appear. The day when an artist could carry out all the principles contained in the aesthetic of romanticism at high noon without fear of molestation from the secular arm would not dawn until our own century.

There is only one accurate way to determine for yourself whether romanticism is in a state of blooming youth or putrefaction, and that is to familiarize yourself with the primitive philosophic spirit behind the movement, to examine the new aesthetic with which it began its career, and has animated it, and controlled its evolution up to the present time; take up the works of the 18th Century founders of the movement, and you will find stated in theory all that we have today in practice.

Joseph Addison, if we confine ourselves to the English aspect, is a good one to begin with, because he stands at the very head of the movement. Our ancestors were accustomed to list the editor of the *Spectator* as a classicist and an anti-romantic. Recently, however, the fatherhood of English romantic aesthetic has been thrust upon him, not, indeed, because he disliked Gothic art, and considered Horace the best of critics, but because between the dates June 21 and July 3, 1712, he published a series of papers in the *Spectator* on the Pleasures of the Imagination. Those who have read through these papers without noting anything of significance would do well to go over them again in the light of what has happened in literature in the past twenty-five years. They bear the ear-marks of having been composed during the excitement phase of a philosophical "jag" in which parts of Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, and a great deal of Locke had been hastily gulped. It is certain that Addison himself never carried any of the radical doctrines there enunciated into artistic or critical practice. He was an Aristotelian to the end. However, the papers are interesting as showing the influence the new Hobbes-Locke psychology was having upon Englishmen, and, what is more important, as showing the particular conclusions these doctrines would inspire when applied to the theory of art. For it was this sensualistic psychology upon which romanticism was built, and not only English romanticism, but, if we are to credit the opinion of Prof. J. G. Robertson (a professed romantic), the romanticism of Italy as well, where, according to him, the whole thing originated.

"It is not too much to say," declares this same authority, "that in the suggestive papers on the imagination Addison laid the foundation of the whole romantic aesthetic in England. And not for England only; the enormous popularity of the *Spectator* in French translation carried his views far and wide; and they were of real significance for

the building up of a new aesthetic doctrine in France and Germany."<sup>2</sup>

Let us see what this foundation was. Before Monday, June 23, 1712, when Addison's first paper (No. 411) was distributed to London breakfast tables, many eminent artistic theorists had written upon the importance of the imagination in literature, including Aristotle, Quintilian, Horace, Cicero and Longinus, with all of whom Addison was familiar. It was a doctrine that everybody admitted, but which had periodically to be reiterated in order to correct certain practices that those who insist on turning art into a pretty science invariably introduce. Undoubtedly there was great need in the year 1712 of bringing the imagination once more to the attention of English litterateurs, enamoured as they were of the Boileau-Rapin neo-classical aesthetic. So a Londoner might have thought that Addison was merely insisting on the classical doctrine in its purity, as against the unbalanced interpretation of pseudo-classicism. Perhaps Addison himself had this intention; yet, the fact is, he made a violent departure from the classical theory, and launched a doctrine of the imagination which lies at the base of the whole romantic art theory.

It was the Hobbes-Locke psychology that was responsible for this mistake. (My reasons for thinking it was a mistake I shall indicate later.) The classical theory of the imagination in art had been built upon the general principles of Aristotelian psychology. In general, it held that works of art were the product of the creative imagination, a process so-called because the imagination or imagining power played the most important role, and not (it is important to note) because the material faculty of the imagination was the only power involved. The creative act and its complement, aesthetic pleasure, was made possible by the union of the image-forming power with the higher rational powers of intellect and will. The imagination alone, considered as the power of recalling and combining past impressions, was useless in art without the intellect and will presiding over this process.

Now if there is any one note that stands out in Addison's treatment of the imagination, it is his tendency to eliminate the intellect from the artistic process, or to reduce its function to a negligible quantity. This is more evident from the general impression one gets from the treatise than from any single quotation; the following, however, is characteristic: "A beautiful prospect delights the soul as much as a demonstration; and a description in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Aristotle. Besides, the pleasures of the imagination have this advantage, above those of the understanding, that they are more obvious and more easy to be acquired. *It is but opening the eye and the scene enters.* The colors paint themselves on the fancy with *very little attention of thought or application of mind* in the beholder."<sup>3</sup> [Italics ours.]

It is to be noted in the first place that this distinction between works of the imagination and those of the under-

<sup>2</sup> *Genesis of Romantic Theory*, pp. 241-242.

<sup>3</sup> *Spectator*, No. 141.



standing is quite valid if properly understood. We all recognize that some works are pre-eminently works of the speculative intellect, while in others the imagination is in the foreground. Yet in neither is the intellect or the imagination wholly absent. It is merely a question of difference of stress. Yet it is evident that Addison was either talking vaguely on this point, or was actually under the impression that the intellect and the imagination were faculties wholly irreconcilable, having no common grounds or complementary functions. And this, it must be confessed, seems the more probable view. If so, he is following the doctrine that Descartes bequeathed to modern Europe of considering the imagination and other sensuous processes of the human composite as going on quite independently of the intellect, which, perched in the pineal gland, leads an Olympian existence of splendid isolation. It is true that Addison concedes to the intellect some part in artistic perception but it is "very little." This "very little" almost entirely evaporates in the next paper, where, when he treats of Beauty, he reduces its objective elements to sense qualities alone, and allows to non-rational animals the power of perceiving the Beautiful.

It must be admitted that the line in the passage quoted that best summarizes Addison's doctrine on the imagination is, "It is but opening the eyes and the scene enters." The reception of images is what constitutes the aesthetic thrill; but whether it is because this operation tickles the retina, or warms up the visual center in the brain he does not say. Certainly it is not because of any intellectual reaction. Forty years later Edmund Burke, under the influence of the same doctrine, but in possession of more advanced psychological data, was to suggest that the resultant pleasure is caused by "the relaxing of the solids of the body."<sup>4</sup>

Thus we see that at the very birth of that movement which was destined to open up a new era for the imagination this most important faculty was somewhat seriously misrepresented. In place of an imaging power under the control of reason and will English litterateurs were invited to do their best to eliminate higher functions from the creative process. Fortunately (or unfortunately if we look at it from another angle), the doctrine was not accepted literally or we should have had pure impressionism at once. Its immediate effect was probably that of spreading the opinion abroad that, in the words of Burke, who had read Addison's treatise, "the influence of reason . . . is nothing near so extensive as is commonly believed." A conclusion not without value for the 18th Century where the part assigned to the intellect in art was entirely too large. Had Addison, and those who followed him in this movement to revive the imagination, relied upon the classical psychology (the psychology of common sense, after all) instead of that of Hobbes and Locke, the balance between the imagination and the intellect (a perennial problem with artists) might have been restored, and the 19th Century have been a different era. But they chose to be guided by the new psychology, which was scornful and dubious

of the intellect, and much immersed in material mental processes. The artist was absolved from the necessity of thinking; and the artistic mind thus freed from the burden of intellectual and volitional control would give itself over to a festival of image making; a riot of color would cover a confusion of ideas; the untrammelled feeling would soar skyward on wings of wax; there would be much poetic soap-bubble blowing, and the business of visiting the interstellar regions on broom straws; romantic revery would take the place of the imagination, and mystic intuition would be invoked when it was felt that a dash of metaphysics was needed.

Addison closes his first paper with the following exhortation to the imaginative life: "We might add that the pleasures of the imagination are more conducive to health than those of the understanding which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended to with a violent labor of the brain" whereas, he continues, "the pleasures of the fancy are able to disperse grief and melancholy, and to set the animal spirits in pleasing and agreeable motion."<sup>5</sup> All this may have sounded very enticing to the 18th Century mind; but to the modern man, upon whose brow sit the sins of 200 imaginative years of impressionistic poetry, Bohemian geniuses, educational elective systems, and varied neuroses, it may possibly seem a bit flat. The impression, indeed, is getting abroad in our own day that a little hard thinking may not be the altogether unwholesome thing for the individual and the race that we have been led to believe.

Addison's next paper in the series (No. 412) is given over to a consideration of those qualities in objects which give rise to the pleasures of the imagination. "And these," he says, "I think all proceed from the sight of what is Great, Uncommon, or Beautiful." The analysis is interesting for two reasons. In the first place the division given of the qualities causing the pleasures of the imagination is followed by Burke and other romantic aestheticians, and is an obvious departure from the classical method of approach. Secondly, and what is more important, in his analysis of Beauty he leaves no room for the intelligible element, and seems to make the perception of it entirely a matter of the senses.

The few paragraphs he had on this last subject begin with the statement of a relativistic theory of Beauty. "There is not, perhaps, any real beauty or deformity more in one piece of matter than in another because we might have been so made that whatever now appears loathsome to us might have shown itself agreeable."<sup>6</sup> This is obviously not the doctrine of the relativity of Beauty we have with us today; he does not say that beauty is a purely subjective affair depending on association, and differing widely from one person to another. He explicitly states that notions of beauty are invariable within the species. "Thus we see that every different species of sensible creatures has its different notion of beauty, and each of them

<sup>5</sup> *Spectator*, No. 412.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Origin of Our Ideas of Beauty and Sublime*, p. 223.



# HOW PHILOSOPHY CAME TO ROME

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IN the transmission of Hellenic culture from Greece to Rome, three factors exerted special and constant influence. These were Greek literature, Greek religion and Greek philosophy; and the least of these was philosophy. Greek literature and religion when transplanted to Italy found a fertile soil; but philosophy had no easy task in winning the West. The Roman's view of knowledge was colored by his *practical* outlook; and scientific investigation and philosophic speculation were uncongenial to his practical nature. The Greek loved to know for the sake of knowing; his curiosity was unbounded, unquenchable; he was but little interested in the use to which he could put his knowledge. But for the Roman, science of any kind, to be worth the knowing, must admit of conversion to some definite, practical account.

Because of this hostile attitude toward pure speculation the early Romans manifested striking examples of philosophical intolerance. Thus in the year 181 B. C. two large chests were accidentally dug up, the one supposed to be the coffin of King Numa, who had been buried some five hundred years before, the other full of his books, seven of which were in Greek. By the command of the Senate, the praetor burned these latter for the only reason that they contained philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Certain details of this story, it is true, cannot withstand the battery of historical criticism, but later Romans accepted the account as representing the attitude of their revered forefathers.<sup>2</sup> Twenty years after this occurrence all Greek philosophers were summarily expelled from Rome. A few years later, in 155 B. C. three learned envoys from Athens, Critolaus the Peripatetic, Carneades the Academic, and Diogenes the Stoic appeared in Rome. Since they had to remain for some time in the discharge of their embassy, they accepted an invitation to give public lectures in philosophy. When the brilliance of these lectures so charmed the Roman youth that the city Fathers feared that the traditional sobriety of Roman thought was in danger, old Cato the Censor stormed and blustered about and demanded that the business of the deputies be quickly finished, so that the philosophers could return to their homes and let the young men of Rome return to their accustomed duties.

But the Spirit of Philosophy, which had so captivated the heart of Hellas, overcame all these setbacks and founded for herself a home also in the Eternal City. Cultivated Romans came in time to feel an attraction for philosophy, not so much as an intellectual and academic luxury, rather as a working principle of life and a guide to happiness. Thus it is chiefly moral philosophy that won the devotion

of the Romans, for having a bearing on conduct, it could be put to practical use. The Stoic school had a special appeal for them; unconsciously the early Fathers of the Republic had been Stoics, and once the system was comprehended by educated Romans they gave themselves to it irresistibly. The ancient religious belief had gradually been falling into decay, so that cultivated minds were glad to have in place of it a theory which was so much in harmony with the Roman genius.

Accordingly we begin to hear of philosophers again appearing in Rome. The Stoic Panaetius, a Greek philosopher of Rhodes, arrived in Rome about 156 B. C. There he was received into the intimate circle of Scipio and Laelius, and by representing the Stoic teaching in a polished and literary form acquired much popularity. Another Stoic, C. Blossius of Cumae was so close a friend to Tiberius Gracchus that he was credited with great influence upon the policies of that statesman. Other philosophers, who did not champion the Stoic system, also won followers. During the first Mithridatic War Philo of Larissa, an Academic, came to Rome, and by his brilliance in exposing his system gained a large number of disciples. The general L. Licinius Lucullus had constantly at his side the Academic Antiochus of Ascalon, even when abroad in his military campaigns. Many similar evidences of a growing interest in philosophy could be instanced. As time went on it came to be the conventional thing for the young Roman of means, who wished to complete his education, to journey to Greece in order to hear the lectures of the renowned philosophers to be found there. Thus Cicero, whose education was more or less typical of that of the well-to-do Roman youth, sought out the Epicureans Phaedrus and Zeno and the Academic Antiochus. In the island of Rhodes Cicero became acquainted with Posidonius, the last of the great Greek Stoics, and entered into the most friendly relations with him.<sup>3</sup> Other Romans also, as, for example, Pompey,<sup>4</sup> devoted themselves to this famous scholar, and there is no doubt but that he exercised vast influence over the growing philosophical consciousness of Rome.

Thus philosophy, as expounded by the Greek masters, became an acknowledged department of liberal education in the Roman world, and nearly all the systems were enabled to take root there. But although Roman gentlemen might maintain Greek philosophers at Rome, or send their sons across the sea to attend their schools, they were after all, at least for the most part, but eclectic dilettanti. Traces of prejudice against mere unpractical speculation long remained, and in the Roman mind the idea still

<sup>1</sup> Livy, XL, xxix.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, N. H. XIII, 86: "In iis libris scripta erant philosophiae Pythagoricae, eosque combustos a Q. Petilio praetore, quia philosophiae scripta essent."

<sup>3</sup> *De Nat. Deorum*, 1, 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Tusc.* II, 25.



lurked that philosophizing was but serious trifling. Accordingly the Romans wrote little or nothing. But the time was to come when they would propagate their philosophical tenets, however unoriginal these might be, through the medium of the Latin language.

The first philosophical writers in Rome were poets. Old Father Ennius in his didactic poem *Epicharmus*, which preceded the great work of Lucretius by over a hundred years, speculated on the nature of things from a Pythagorean viewpoint. Some time later Q. Valerius of Sora published a poem setting forth the Stoic system. But the classic example of didactic philosophical poetry in any language is the famous *De Rerum Natura* of Lucretius, which expounds the system of Epicurus. This system had at the outset aroused great interest in Rome; the explanations it offered to account for natural phenomena, especially those which are ever regarded with wonder and awe, had stirred up popular curiosity. Lucretius, the first great author of Rome's Golden Age, lived in a time when the old religious doctrines were dissolving into scepticism. But he felt that he had conquered intellectual and religious doubt, and found peace in the philosophy of Epicurus. Persuaded of his duty to liberate his fellow-men from superstition and delusion, with the ardor of a missionary and reformer he composed his remarkable poem, which is not a work of pure speculative philosophy, but which was written with a practical end in view, to heal the heart of man weary with the evils of life.

But though Lucretius had succeeded in making of Epicureanism an epic, the Romans realized, as had the Greeks before them, that the proper vehicle for philosophic expression is not poetry but prose. When philosophic prose was first introduced we do not know; perhaps it was in a work of L. Aelius Stilo *De Proloquiis*, which was to some extent of a philosophical nature. The Epicureans, especially Amafinius and Rabirius, were very active in the domain of philosophical authorship, but they paid so little attention to style that for Cicero they were utterly repulsive.<sup>5</sup> On the borderline between history and philosophy was Varro's work *Logistorici*, a book of essays dealing more or less with ethical subjects. He composed also a book *De Philosophia*, which St. Augustine, due to his interest in ancient philosophy, has analyzed for us.<sup>6</sup> But Varro was not a great philosopher; Cicero thus gently unbraids him:<sup>7</sup> "Philosophiam multis locis incohasti, ad impellendum satis, ad edocendum parum." His limitations in the realm of philosophy prevented him from assimilating thoroughly any complete system. But he did good work for philosophy by endeavoring to Romanize it. Besides these, we find also Marcus Brutus writing prose works of a philosophical character, on Virtue, on

Duty, on Patience. His friend Cicero praises him in these extravagant terms: "Brutus noster, excellens omni genere laudis, sic philosophiam latinis litteris persequitur, nihil ut iisdem de rebus Graeca desideres."<sup>8</sup> But none of these works was of permanent importance; it was left for Cicero himself to be the creator of philosophical prose in Latin.

Cicero had been genuinely interested in philosophy all his life. As a young man he had become acquainted with all the principal Greek systems and had heard many of the renowned lecturers. Yet he did not devote himself to philosophical authorship out of any inner need or urge to express himself, such as had impelled Plato and Aristotle. The occasion which led him to give himself to philosophical exposition was his exclusion from political activity after the establishment of the first triumvirate. There was no longer any place for him in public life; very well; if he could no longer benefit his countrymen as a statesman, he would do so as a philosopher; the commonwealth must not be deprived of Cicero!<sup>9</sup> He probably first realized that he had some talent for philosophical disquisition while composing his rhetorical and political treatises; the *De Republica* and the *De Legibus* especially deal with philosophical questions. But the immediate occasion which led him to embark on philosophical composition was the death of his beloved daughter Tullia, who met an untimely end in the year 45 B. C. In vain did his friends endeavor to comfort him. At length, to assuage his grief he began reading Greek treatises on consolation in bereavement. Then he himself conceived the idea of composing a work on consolation for his own benefit. "Then it was," he tells us,<sup>10</sup> "that, wounded most grievously by fortune and freed from the duty of public service, I sought relief from suffering in philosophy." In March of the year 45, the month after his daughter's death, he was diligently engaged in his task. So heartened was he by his labor, and so pleased with the finished book *Consolatio* that he now conceived the ambitious project of composing for his country-men a series of treatises on universal philosophy, as the Greeks, and notably Plato, had done before him. But he realized that such a plan would not meet with whole-souled approbation; there still remained a bit of the ancient suspicion that philosophical speculation was un-Roman and had best be left to unpractical Greeks. Accordingly his first care was to compose an introductory work called *Hortensius*, which would batter down prejudice and arouse enthusiasm for philosophy. For no theme was Cicero better fitted; as no keenness of philosophical insight, no ability for profound and sustained thought was necessary, his great rhetorical gifts had full scope for their exercise. It is a matter of great regret that this work, the "Crown of Cicero's dialogues" has not come down to us. The *Hortensius* was successful beyond Cicero's hopes; the delight with which it was read, the interest it excited, and the manner in which it

<sup>5</sup> *Acad. Post.* 1, 2, 5: "Qui (Amafinius et Rabirius) nulla arte adhibita de rebus ante oculos positus vulgari sermone disputant, nihil definiunt, nihil partiuntur, nihil apta interrogatione concludunt, nullam denique artem esse nec dicendi nec disserendi putant." Cf. also *Ad Fam.* XV, 19, 2.

<sup>6</sup> *De Civ. Dei*, XIX, i-iii.

<sup>7</sup> *Acad. Post.* I, 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, I, 3, 12.

<sup>9</sup> *De Div.* II, 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Acad. Post.* I, 3.



# DESCARTES AND FRENCH JESUITS

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TO enter upon a study of Descartes without at the same time making a study of the diverse reactions produced by his teaching would entail the risk of an inadequate and unjust appraisal of both the man and his doctrine. The French Jesuits of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries furnish us, as it were, a fairly representative cross-section of the highly varied and even contradictory opinions which obtained among the scholastic philosophers of these two centuries in regard to Descartes' works. A survey of this cross-section displays not only the indignant anathemas of those who had naught but scorn for Cartesianism and its tenets but also the exaggerated encomiums of those who lauded the power and genius of Descartes and the sublimity of his teaching. The Jesuit advocates of Cartesianism, which suffered a decline with the advent of Malebranche, were, however, comparatively few in number, the majority being among the adversaries of the new system.

Extremists were to be found among both the adherents and the opponents to the Cartesian system. But there were, besides, those who took a middle course. These latter gave credit to Descartes where they thought he merited credit and censured him where they deemed him deserving of censure. Such men, for instance, were Fathers René Rapin, Louis Le Valois, and others who, while strenuously opposing Descartes' method of universal methodical doubt and many of his philosophical definitions and principles, yet had high praise for his rich contributions to the sciences of mathematics and physics. The Fathers Georges Fournier, professor of mathematics at La Flèche; Etienne Noel, who taught philosophy and mathematics at the College of La Flèche and later filled posts as rector and vice-provincial; Francois de la Chaize, professor of humanities and philosophy in the Holy Trinity College at Lyon, afterwards rector of the college and confessor to Louis XIV; Grégoire de Saint-Vincent, successor to Father Clavius in the chair of mathematics in the Roman College;—these Jesuit Fathers, as well as others too numerous to mention, were enthusiastic admirers of Descartes as a physicist and mathematician. The following statement made by Father Rapin is typical of the testimonies expressed by the above-mentioned Jesuits in tribute to Descartes' scientific genius. Father Rapin says: "But, after all, to do justice to our nation and to the memory of Descartes, let us admit that his physics is one of the most subtle and faultless of modern physics. . . . It is a thoughtful and orderly work. His method, however, is wholly geometric, proceeding from principle to principle and from proposition to proposition; and it is in this respect alone that he can be criticised."

As for Descartes' strictly philosophical works, we find

a small group of Jesuits in sympathy with them. And of those who were won over to the Cartesian philosophy, some were very intense in their attachment to the system, whereas others were more moderate in showing themselves well disposed toward it. During his lifetime, Descartes had the great satisfaction of numbering among his professed adherents two of the professors of the College of La Flèche, namely Fathers Vatier and Mesland.

Having received and read a copy of Descartes' philosophical "Essays" in 1637, Father Vatier wrote a letter to Descartes, in which, together with a few remarks, he praised the work and even asked the author to make a complete publication of both his physics and his metaphysics. The felicitations of Father Vatier caused Descartes to entertain vain hopes of winning over the whole Order, for in March, 1638, he writes to Huygens: "And, because I am aware of the union and harmony which obtains among the members of this Order, the testimony of only one of them is sufficient to make me hope to have all of them on my side."

Father Mesland was a still more enthusiastic admirer of Descartes. As a student of theology at La Flèche, Father Mesland possessed all the spiritedness of young manhood, which, ordinarily, is not content with half measures. In the ardor of his enthusiasm, Father Mesland made an abridgement of Descartes' "Meditations", putting them in scholastic form with a view to rendering them suitable for the classroom. Descartes was highly pleased, not to say flattered, at the reception his works received from Father Mesland. The Father, however, could not accept Descartes' statement that substance and accident are not really but only logically distinct. Furthermore, Descartes holding, as he did, that the essence of matter is extension, came into conflict with Aristotle's teaching that local extension is an accident. Fascinated as he was by Descartes' genius, Father Mesland seems to have accepted the explanations Descartes offered in his endeavor to explain away the intransigency between his own doctrine and that of the scholastics. It was at this time that Father Mesland was sent on the North American missions. There is a diversity of opinion regarding the reasons for his departure at this juncture, some authors affirming that he was, as it were, exiled because of his too great attachment to the new philosophy, and others being of the opinion that he had volunteered for the missions. Be that as it may, let us turn to the interesting farewell Descartes bade his friend in a letter written on this occasion:

"I read with great emotion the final adieu in your letter; it would have touched me more did I not live here in a country where I daily see people returned from the antipodes. These common examples give me hopes of



seeing you again some day in Europe. Though your design of converting the savages is most generous and pious, yet because I am persuaded that to execute it you only want much zeal and patience, and not much talent and knowledge, I think that the talents God has given you could be better employed here in converting our atheists, who are proud of their talents, and will only submit to the evidence of reason. I therefore hope that when you have made some expeditions to the places where you are bound, and have conquered some thousands of souls for God, the same spirit which has led you there will bring you home again."

In the early part of the 18th Century, the Fifteenth General Congregation of the Society deemed it desirable to prohibit thirty Cartesian propositions from being taught in Jesuit schools. In 1732, a further ten theses were banned, which were likewise held to be in the spirit of Descartes, and which contradicted the scholastic views regarding matter and form.

While it has often unauthoritatively been stated that the persecution of Descartes' works by the Catholic Church was attributable to the Jesuits, it is true that their author had to face bitter opposition from individual members of the Order. Father Bourdin, professor of mathematics of Clermont, and one of the first antagonists of Cartesianism, launched his attack against Descartes with all the weapons of scholastic polemics. Father Bourdin never brought to completion his controversial essay entitled, "Septièmes Objections".

Some of the French Jesuit adversaries of Cartesianism were the Fathers Fabri, Le Valois, Daniel, and Hardouin; though there were others of less importance who wrote and published works against Descartes.

Father Louis Le Valois attacked Descartes on one of his most vulnerable points, namely on the question of the essence of matter. For Descartes' teaching that the essence of matter is extension was incompatible with the accepted philosophical conclusions regarding the Holy Eucharist. Father Le Valois' book, calling attention to this caused great alarm in the camp of the Cartesians, who immediately redoubled their protestations of faith, of piety, and of submission to the Council of Trent.

Father Gabriel Daniel, who was born just one year before Descartes' death, has written probably the most interesting controversial work ever launched against the innovator. This masterpiece entitled "A voyage to the World of Cartesius" is a satirical refutation of the whole Cartesian system but especially of the cosmology. Descartes, as we know, taught that mind and matter are so opposed that the soul is not the form of the body, but soul and body are rather two complete substances tied together. The body, Descartes teaches, is a machine, so constructed that it carries on its own operations by virtue of the impulse received from the soul, which functions in the pineal gland. This portion of the brain is selected as the seat of the soul's activity because it is the only part of the cerebral substance which is not double. Father Daniel,

therefore, arguing "ad hominem", by a naive literary device succeeds in separating Descartes' soul from his body, placing it in the third heaven, that is, according to the Cartesian cosmology, in the midst of an indefinite expanse beyond the fixed stars. Father Daniel goes to visit him up there, and Descartes unfolds to him the whole of Cartesian philosophy. This fiction of Father Daniel is, indeed, artificial, but once accepted it is only just to say that Father Daniel has treated his subject in a truly remarkable fashion. His "Voyage", pleasingly written, reads easily. The incidents narrated are cleverly juxtaposed, and the criticisms (which are the chief point of the work) are characterized by a sparkling clearness and a generally good motivation.

Father Jean Hardouin was another formidable adversary of the new philosophy. Though a savant of immense erudition and prodigious memory, his love of paradox in some matters deprived his opinions of all authority. He arbitrarily defined an atheist as anyone who maintains that God is Being, Truth, The Infinite, The Good, etc. With such a definition, it was an easy matter for him to designate Descartes and Malebranche as atheists by citing numerous passages from their works where God is called Being or The Infinite.

From a detailed study of the reception Descartes' works received from the French Jesuits of the 17th and 18th Centuries, there naturally arise several conclusions which allow us to summarize with accuracy and justice the attitude of the Jesuits towards Cartesianism. A tradition servilely followed by historians of the French universities is that which represents the Jesuits as blind and implacable adversaries of the Cartesian tenets. It is, however, a false tradition, not to say unjust. History, if traced to its sources, shows the Jesuit Fathers to be as equitable as any of Descartes' opponents.

It is true that disciples of Descartes in the strict sense of the word were found among the Jesuits only as exceptions. The Society as a body opposed the introduction of Cartesian metaphysics into its scholasticates and colleges. Nor was this prohibition of Cartesianism peculiar to the Jesuits, for they shared it with other Peripatetics of the day. Future events were to manifest their common sense in more than one way, since today the metaphysics of Descartes and Malebranche have been abandoned by the majority of philosophers.

Secondly, in the realms of physics the Cartesian theories were not ostracized by the Jesuits. As a matter of fact, not only did a number of professors show a kindly attitude, but in some cases they even borrowed from Descartes' physics.

And lastly, those who attacked Descartes in their works mingled praise with their criticisms. How could they have forgotten that this genius, often indeed misled, but great even in his errors, had at one time been their pupil, and had time after time given testimony of his great affection and esteem for the Jesuits? Nor is there wanting evidence of the friendly spirit that existed between Des-



cartes and his Jesuit contemporaries. When in 1644 Descartes made a brief sojourn in Paris, he took particular pains to conciliate the Jesuit order, which was disposed to adopt his side as the more orthodox of the two against Gassendi; and he even made friends with his assailant,

Father Bourdin. Many noted Jesuits, such as Father Buffier, battled against the Cartesian philosophy only on certain points and, like Father Le Valois, with all good grace recognized the fact that Descartes had made not a few excellent discoveries.

## GERMAN INFLUENCES IN AMERICA

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THE world of learning is greatly indebted to German scholars. For without the results of their prodigious toil modern scholarship would be far less advanced than it is. German influence on America has been great and in many respects decidedly for the good. But Germany, too, has harbored a spirit all too eager to break away from Europe's traditional culture. In the 16th Century through Luther she threw off the theological past. This revolt resulted, not in a new religious system able to stand the test of time, but in myriad systems even yet disintegrating more and more. In the 18th Century she threw off the philosophical past, when Kant ushered in the philosophical counterpart of the Reformation. This revolt resulted in unnumbered species of idealism and relativism whose end is not yet. Germany, like the modern mind she has done so much to foster, has been too prone to forget that knowledge is cumulative, the result of the thought and experience of many minds which in the course of centuries filter the gold from the dross. To assert imprudent independence and suddenly cut ourselves off from the wisdom and experience of the sages of the past, thinking we can build a new system all by ourselves, usually proves intellectual suicide. Of the numerous systems which German thinkers after Kant originated, there remain indeed aftermaths of influence in the building of short-lived eclectic philosophies. But as integral systems they scarcely outlived the lifetimes of their founders. In Germany's own universities today those philosophers are read as historical phenomena, but no one gives them his credo. However, because Germany has been so eager to follow fads, many of her influences which have entered America are mixed with error and evil. Treating some influences of the German University on America's higher educational system will make clear, we hope, a prominent source of many of the philosophical, theological, and intellectual notions so prevalent in the United States today.

As we survey Germany's intellectual life of the 18th and 19th Centuries we gaze upon a welter of opinions in philosophy, theology, exegesis and literature. German rationalism begins with the philosophy of Wolf (1679-1754). This, and the rationalistic biblical criticism of Semler dealt severe blows to orthodox Lutheranism, the backbone of German Protestantism. Amid the prevailing doubt and negation-theology, now become the handmaid of philosophy, the Germans eagerly adopted the

philosophy of Kant (1724-1804), which made the essence of religion and the whole value of Scripture consist in the teaching of merely natural ethics. Following Kant are Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, von Hartman, Haeckel and others. Against the rationalistic theology founded on Kantianism arose a reaction of wide influence. It was the system of Schleiermacher, which among other doctrines made sentiment or the feelings of the heart the criterion of religious truth.

The chief source of the German University's influence on America probably lay in the communication of an educational ideal. When Americans came to idolise German education, they also absorbed and imported the German philosophical and theological turmoil. There are two educational ideals to which our attention is frequently drawn. The one seeks the harmonious development of all the human faculties, the other seeks to expand the field of knowledge. The one is content with knowledge of comparatively few facts, but demands that the pupil weigh, judge and correlate them well, the other demands the mastery of a body of facts so large it sometimes stifles interest. The one is the time-honored ideal of liberal education, which seeks to stimulate the student's imagination, enrich his intellectual life and develop his powers of judgment, which was much discussed and formulated in last century England, and about which Newman wrote:

"That only is true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their mutual interdependence."<sup>1</sup>

The other was extensively developed in the German universities, where the aims, says Friederich Paulsen, exponent of his country's system, are

" . . . (1) scientific professional knowledge; (2) ability to do independent scientific work . . . " i. e., "ability to pursue scientific investigations, . . . to inaugurate and carry them on oneself," i. e., to pursue research, . . . (3) "philosophical culture"; laying "the foundation for an intelligent personal theory of the world and life."<sup>2</sup>

These two ideals are not mutually exclusive. But in the systems employed in the American universities they have not yet been properly harmonized. The German ideal,

<sup>1</sup> *Idea of a University*, Newman, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *The German Universities and University Study*, Friederich Paulsen, p. 306ff.



proper enough in the university, has grown so strong that too often it chokes out the harmonious development which ought to take place in the college. Literature has been dealt with after the methods of the exact sciences and even supplanted by grammar and philology. We attempt too much to measure the spiritual by the material. Our error is not that we have copied, but that we have copied poorly. Germany had an elective system in her universities; we have taken it into the college and high school. In Germany the pursuit of research begins only after the extensive knowledge given by the gymnasium. But in America too often the pressure of research bears down on the pupil, before he has an adequate acquaintance with other subjects which is necessary to shield him from the dangers of narrow views. Moreover, as the Humanists complain, since the Doctors of Philosophy required as department heads and college teachers too often have been men whose training has been confined to highly technical work in some narrow field, men interested in narrow details rather than in the fundamental principles and problems of life, the cultural function of the college is being crowded out.<sup>3</sup>

How far have the German universities been instrumental in bringing about these situations? A few facts clearly narrate the story. After the war of 1812 Americans desired better higher education than they could obtain at home. They could not go to England. Feeling ran too high, the English universities were in poor scholastic condition, and Americans were unwilling to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church, an English university entrance requirement until 1871. Nor did they go to France. French scholars were less well known than the Germans, the libraries of the German universities were better fitted for use, and the Americans were more impressed by German erudition than by French lucidity. So, despite the greater difficulties of distance and language, in the early 19th Century Americans began to go to Germany for higher education.

Edward Everett, George Tiknor, George Bancroft, and Joseph Green Cogswell were the first four Americans who in 1815 or shortly after went to Göttingen University. Everett, who since his graduation from Harvard in 1811 had been a minister and professor of Greek at his Alma Mater, registered for further studies in Greek. But after a while he confined himself almost wholly to philosophy, the pantheism of Spinoza. In 1820 he returned to Harvard as Professor of Greek. One of his pupils was Ralph W. Emerson. He looked upon Everett as his ideal, and from him learned much of what later became New England Transcendentalism.<sup>4</sup>

Tiknor's letters show us the conditions in the German universities. He writes to Edw. T. Channing that there "is an extreme freedom . . . in thinking, speaking, writing and teaching on all subjects, . . . nobody can read the books published without observing their high abstract nature, and seeing that their free tone is derived almost . . .

altogether from the general character of the prevalent metaphysics."<sup>5</sup> He also wrote to Channing saying that each philosopher seemed to have a system of his own collected from parts of the systems of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. Tiknor returned to Harvard. He strenuously promoted the elective system, and his efforts fructified when the system was finally introduced under President Eliot.

The number of Americans in the German universities increased slowly at first. By 1850 it had not yet passed two hundred. But a rapid increase began, and by 1910 ten thousand Americans had matriculated, half of them at Berlin University. Of these ten thousand, half belonged to the department of philosophy. More and more graduates of the German universities held professorships in America. German ideals were preached, which exalted the pursuit of research. German methods were transplanted. Among them were the lecture system, sharply distinct from the English tutorial system or the American system of class teaching and discussion, and the seminar, a German institution to facilitate research by having several students work under a professor's direction. Americans attempted to imitate the entire German higher educational system. French and German influence shared the development of the University of Michigan. Dr. Alexander Bache, taking office as president of Girard College, visited Germany in preparation for his task. Andrew D. White, as professor at Michigan (1856-1862) and later in the foundation of Cornell did much to spread the idea of the German University. Johns Hopkins was founded in 1876, with Daniel C. Gilman as its first president. "The keynote of the German system was also the keynote of Mr. Gilman's conception of the university that was to be; for he had in view the appointment of professors who had shown their ability as investigators, whose duties as teachers would not be so burdensome as to interfere with the prosecution of their researches, . . ." <sup>6</sup> Of the fifty-three members of the faculty practically all had spent some time at German universities, and thirteen had received the degree of doctor. The emphasis was placed on the field, the subject. This was proper enough at Johns Hopkins with its specific purpose. But other universities have sought to rival Johns Hopkins, and we may wonder whether the adoption of this ideal was in all cases proper.

The German University has profoundly influenced American Protestant theology. The first contact between the theological faculties of the respective countries resulted in a clash, for the German faculties represented a force of rationalistic investigation and scholarship, while the American held to the traditional beliefs of their various denominations. But the German influence proved the stronger. It has been great and lasting in the linguistic, historical and dogmatical sections of this field. Moses Stuart became professor of sacred literature at Andover Theological Seminary in 1810. He introduced the works

<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Chas. F. Thwing, *The American and the German Universities*, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> Fabian Franklin, in his biography of Daniel C. Gilman. Quoted by Thwing, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The American Scholar*, Foerster, esp. p. 58ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Modern Schoolman*, VI. No. 1, p. 13.



of Gesenius, Ewald and Rosenmueller, German exegetes, who wrote in a rationalistic spirit. The teaching of Hebrew thus begun has continued over a century under German influence. The teaching of the New Testament has been made "no longer subordinate . . . to dogmatic theology." In history Mosheim "abandoned all the preceding and polemic exposition of Church history for a just, impartial account free from ecclesiastical bias." His book is the first textbook written in America. Next came a book by Gieseler, and then "the adoption of a theory of development taking up the inspiring suggestions of Herder, but controlled by the logic of Hegel."<sup>7</sup>

One of the most influential of Protestant thinkers and dogmatic theologians was Henry Boynton Smith. He had matriculated at Halle in 1838 when the school of Schleiermacher was in the ascendancy, and shortly after Strauss had published his "Life of Jesus" adopting Hegel's principles in interpreting the person of Christ. Smith became the student and spiritual child of Tholuch, who "guarded the great essential facts and truths of the Christian system with uncompromising jealousy. But he was very tolerant concerning *what seemed to him* the non-essentials."<sup>8</sup> Smith and Wm. T. Harris were the two Americans who probably understood Hegel's system the best.<sup>9</sup> Professor of philosophy at Amherst, of history and theology at Union Seminary, Smith was for thirty-five years a leader in American Protestant theological thinking, and since his death in 1877 the traditions which he helped to establish have been continued.

There have been noteworthy influences which were directly philosophical. New England transcendentalism is traceable largely to an enthusiastic study and spread of German philosophy through the University of Vermont. Then in psychology we must reckon with Wundt (1832-1920) of Leipzig and his American intellectual disciple, Titchener of Cornell, the teacher of William James of Harvard. The behavioristic materialism of these men forms the basis of the greater portion of the textbooks and literature now published on the subject of education and used in American Normal schools. Nor should we omit mention of Ernest Haeckel, the philosopher of Jena, whose theory of materialistic evolution, perhaps modified, is the dogma implicitly or openly taught in most American non-sectarian and state universities today.

Where can we seek remedies for these many evil influences? In philosophy a remedy is to be found in scholasticism, which, though capable of developing ever, does stand the filtering of the ages; which leaves ample space for the accidental changes necessitated by progress in science, but remains unchanged at the core. Scholasticism maintains that truth is not relative, but absolute, unchanging. What was true in the time of Thomas Aquinas, or Augustine, or Christ, or Plato, be it a principle of morality

or metaphysics, is true today and will be true forever—that scholasticism which seeks the ultimate causes of the real world we see about us, rather than, after the manner of idealism, excogitates a world of its own and then speculates about this fiction of its fancy.

FREUD AND AESTHETICS

*Continued from page 24*

without doubt, constituted the essence and the secret of his being."<sup>10</sup> His restless passions, regardless of what anyone may have told him in the matter, do not seem to have mastered da Vinci; his craving to know rather diverted his attention from his own ego to the world round about him.

Da Vinci's thirst for research was so determined that he may be compared with the obsessed type, and so determined again, that his investigation is comparable to the mental rumination of the neurotic. His scientific research work is noticeably marked by traces of unconscious forces: insatiability, invincible obstinacy and the impossibility of adapting himself to the reality of circumstances. The influence of the Oedipus-complex shows itself very clearly in da Vinci's paternal identification; he imitates his father in everything. Like his father, da Vinci took delight in exterior ostentation; posterity has often reproached him for having left a number of unfinished works; the reason for this is because he produced but failed to take further care of his products, just like his father had done for him. Since he lived his infancy at a distance from his father, it was only natural that he would form and sustain personal opinions without relying on any authority; it would also be a crying contradiction if he "had not succeeded in throwing off the yoke of dogmatic religion," since in Freudian psychology "the personal god is nothing other than the father transfigured."<sup>11</sup> As a matter of fact, da Vinci was accused, even while he was still alive, of no longer believing in Catholic dogmas.

But the dominating influence of da Vinci's genius is always the unconscious influence of his infantile love for his mother. Thus is explained his persistent taste for infantile games, for it is in these games that he found again the great pleasure he experienced when close to his mother up to the time he was five years old. If, towards his fiftieth year, his profound depths of art are aroused, it is because a woman has animated in him "the happy and sensually exalted memory of his mother—as result, he painted 'Mona Lisa' and 'St. Anne with Virgin and Child': da Vinci alone could have produced such works of art." In the picture of St. Anne, why is there that aspect of youth and that smile which recalls the one of Mona Lisa? Because the grandmother corresponds to the mother whom he loved; what he can no longer obtain from his mother he obtains from art, and his paintings

<sup>7</sup> Prof. Francis H. Christie, quoted by Thwing, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>8</sup> L. F. Stearns, quoted by Thwing, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>9</sup> Thwing, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 177.



are "the realization of the desires of the child who formerly was fascinated by his mother."

This relation between the psychology of the artist and that of the child would appear even more clearly if one were to admit a parallelism between ontogeny and phylogeny, the point of view which Freud endeavors to establish in "Totem und Tabu."

Some authors little favorable to a great number of psychoanalytic views have applauded Freud's ideas on art and poetry. Let us cite for example Frederick Lefebvre: "All of us are virtual poets. At the bottom of our daily life, superficial and banal as it is, we have an obscure mysterious life; a life, however, which has a formidable influence on our actions and thoughts. It is a reservoir of vague, indistinct things; it is a mysterious pond in which the poet casts his net in order to draw it out again glistening with a miraculous catch . . . Freud has acquainted us with the elements of this profound life . . . These inhibited tendencies, these ghosts moving about which, in a sickly and weak soul are physical disorders, psychosis and lunacy, once they have been touched by the wand of the magician on coming out of the subterranean tunnel, become the glowing creations of art."<sup>12</sup>

Others again have reproached Freud for the grave fault of suppressing the influence of the superior direction given by the intellect and the will. Chesterton compares these tactics to those used in publicity: "Both have in common the idea of penetrating behind the ordinary conduct of man by means of the reason and the will in order to actuate the other hidden energies which move man like an automaton."<sup>13</sup> One, however, must not affirm too quickly that Freud has entirely neglected the rôle of the intellect in these matters; he clearly states that psychoanalysis cannot have the last word in the matter of art. His curious study on the "Moses" of Michael Angelo has explicitly put the intellectual factors in the foreground, but his commentaries on the subject, nevertheless, leave the superior influence of these intellectual factors in the dark and content themselves rather with investigating the emotional activities.

Finally, and especially, one always meets with the affirmation of the primacy of the sexual "libido" in the origin of sensitive tendencies. It is only just to admit that both art and poetry have need of rich and emotional complexes in order to expand; without them human aesthetics cannot be realized. No one can deny Freud the merit of having insisted on these necessities of the psychological life, even so far as to include its highest expressions. But to admit emotion in art does not mean that emotion and "libido" are controvertible terms. The errors of method which destroy the foundation upon which Freud has built his theories of sexual evolution have been pointed out in other works. Freud's psychological merits, and they are

very real, will always be vitiated by his pretension of giving sexual activity as the source of the highest aspirations of humanity.

## HOW PHILOSOPHY CAME TO ROME

*Continued from page 30*

was received also by later generations is depicted for us by St. Augustine.<sup>11</sup>

The ice once broken by this introductory essay, Cicero set about composing treatises on the various branches of philosophy; and as he labored his enthusiasm for the work grew; he wrote with tireless energy; and his philosophical productions during the two years 45 and 44 B. C. would do credit to a lifetime spent in such occupation. In rapid succession books on the problem of knowledge, questions of ethics, the philosophy of religion, and the like appeared. His own contributions were, as he frankly states,<sup>12</sup> mostly translations: "minore labore fiunt; verba tantum affero, quibus abundo." He had few original ideas to publish; he was content to expound the views of others, preferably the Greeks. But his talent for exposition amounted almost to genius. He was the first Roman to write on philosophical subjects in a clear and elevated style, and consequently was the creator of philosophical Latin prose. With Cicero philosophy finally came to Rome.

<sup>11</sup> *Confess.* III, 4, 7; VIII, 7, 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Ad Att.* XII. 52.

## ADDISON'S ROMANTIC AESTHETIC

*Continued from page 28*

is most affected with the beauties of its own kind. This is nowhere more remarkable than in birds of the same shape and proportion wherein we often see the male determined in his courtship by the single grain or tincture of a feather, and never discovering any charm but in the color of its species." It is easy to gather from this Addison's notion of Beauty. Subjectively considered it might be described as a feeling of pleasure, highly teleological in nature, which arises on the perception of objects useful to the individual and the species. It is a purely sensistic perception.

Further confirmation is given to this conclusion by what he has to say about "a second kind of beauty that we find in the several products of art and nature, which does not work on the imagination with that warmth and violence as the Beauty that appears in our proper species, but is apt, however, to raise in us a secret delight and a kind of fondness for places or objects in which we discover it. This consists either in the Gaiety and Variety of Colors, in the Symmetry and Proportion of Parts, in the Arrangement and Disposition of Bodies, or in a just mixture and concurrence of all together." The inclusion of "Symmetry and Proportion" might have saved Addison from the charge of sensism had he taken the trouble to explain what he meant by them. But he does not. The phrase has all

<sup>12</sup> *Les Matinées du Hêtre rouge*, pp. 171-173, Flammarion, Paris, 1929.

<sup>13</sup> *Revue Catholique des idées, et des faits*, Jan. 25, 1929, pp. 7, 8, Bruxelles. Trans. from French text.



the appearance of having been thrown out at random to round out an enumeration, and having fulfilled its purpose, he promptly forgets about it, and spends the remainder of the paper in explaining the importance of color and sound and smell in inducing the sentiment of Beauty.

Call this a mere mistake in emphasis if you will; but behind it lurks the romantic frenzy to rid itself of metaphysics, to reduce objective Beauty to a shell of physical accidents, sound, color, smell. If it is a mistake in emphasis, it is the mistake that all romanticism would follow him in—phenomenalism, an intense pre-occupation with the surface qualities of objects, a singular aptitude for describing psychic and material phenomena with a corresponding disinterest in the unchanging reality below the flux.

In this connection there occurs toward the end of the next paper (No. 413) a passage which clearly makes Addison the father of the "escape mechanism" theory of literature. He is talking along in a truly sublime way about the teleology of Beauty, and of the final causes why God has placed this quality in the universe, when suddenly he thinks of "that great Modern Discovery which is at present universally acknowledged by all the Enquirers into Natural Philosophy; Namely, that Light and Colors, as apprehended by the Imagination, are only Ideas in the Mind and not Qualities that have any Existence in Matter. As this is a Truth which has been proved incontestably by many Modern Philosophers, and is indeed one of the finest Speculations in that Science, if the English Reader would see the notion explained at large, he may find it in the Eighth Chapter of the second Book of Mr. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding." Whereupon he promptly falls into an ecstasy the fruit of which is the following: "We are everywhere entertained with pleasing Shows and Apparitions, we discover imaginary Glories in the Heavens and in the Earth, and we see some of the Visionary Beauty poured out upon the whole Creation; but what a rough unsightly Sketch of Nature would we be entertained with did all her Colouring disappear, and the several Distinctions of Light and Shade vanish! In short, our Souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing Delusion, and we walk about like the Enchanted Hero in a Romance, who sees beautiful Castles, Woods, and Meadows; and at the same time hears the warbling of Birds and the purling of Streams; but upon the finishing of some secret Spell, the fantastick Scene breaks up, and the disconsolate Knight finds himself on a barren Heath, or in a solitary Desert."

Those who contend that Locke's doctrine on the secondary qualities of matter logically leads to idealism have here a seeming confirmation of their claim. But whether or not the doctrine logically leads to idealism (the question seems to be still sub judice) here is an instance where it did lead (logically or not) to this position, and it is not difficult to point out other concrete instances of it in 18th Century Aesthetic, including that of Jeffrey and Alison. It can truly be said that this doctrine played no small part among the other forces that conspired to cut

away the real world from the romantic mind, and to throw it into a spasm of introversion. Observe the irony of the position it forced Addison into. He makes the essence of Beauty consist largely in color, sound, and smell, all secondary qualities of matter. Then he denies, upon Locke's authority, extra-mental existence to these. Where are they to be found? In the mind alone; so it is to the inner recesses of the mind that the escape from the stark reality of the world must be made, there to delight in cerebral fire-works, and to watch the corruscations along the process fibers as their mysterious inner chemicals flare up and glow in perfect accord with the first and second primary laws of association. A very interesting program, perhaps,—like an afternoon with Debussy. But soon would the Spell be broken, the fantastick Scene break up, and the disconsolate Knight find himself in a barren Heath, or in a solitary Desert. Then we would have the literature of frustration and despair.

Of course Addison, as we have remarked before, never carried any of these doctrines into practice. His criticism remains to the last Aristotelian, and has for its foundation, with the exception of the papers on the Pleasures of the Imagination, the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* to which he appeals continually through Horace's *Ars Poetica*. It is interesting to note, too, that even in Pleasures of the Imagination there are only a few papers that show the influence of Locke, and the confusion attendant thereupon. In the others it is the old Addison that appears, fortified by the primitive common sense that a lifetime of immersion in the classics of Greece and Rome had given him; and as could be predicted, he says some uncommonly fine things.

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## Scholastic Philosophical Convention

The American Catholic Philosophical Association held its sixth annual convention at Loyola University, Chicago, on December 29 and 30. The meetings were well attended and a lively interest was taken in the papers presented, as the discussion following each clearly showed. The papers of the first day dealt mainly with the problems that scholastic philosophy must face if it is to meet the modern advances in science. Noteworthy was the paper by Karl F. Herzfeld of Johns Hopkins University, "The Frontiers of Modern Physics and Philosophy"; the author discussed the various points of disagreement between modern physics and scholasticism, emphasizing especially their difference in attitude toward causality and the ultimate constitution of matter. On Monday evening at the annual dinner Monsignor James H. Ryan delivered the presidential address, stressing the point that neo-scholasticism has not influenced modern-day philosophy, and in so far it has been a failure; he did not endeavor to point out the causes of this failure, but asked the members of the Association to give it serious consideration.



The morning session of the second day was taken up with a symposium on St. Augustine, at which, among others, two scholarly papers were read, one by Anton C. Pegis of Marquette University entitled "St. Augustine's Definition of Man," and the other "The Illumination Theory in St. Augustine," by Henry S. Bellisle of the University of Toronto. In the afternoon at the business meeting the officers for the coming year were elected.

They are: Gerald B. Phelan of the University of Toronto, President; James A. McWilliams of St. Louis University, Vice-President; and Charles A. Hart of Catholic University, Secretary-Treasurer.

The convention was in every way a success and especially noteworthy for the fact that two laymen, Professors Herzfeld and Pegis, read papers. A representative group from various parts of the country attended.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

By Jules de la Vaissière, S. J.—*St. Louis, Herder*

Most teachers, although desirous of keeping pace with the trend of educational psychology, have neither the time nor the heroic persistence required to wade through the morass of good, bad and indifferent books and periodicals on the subject. The translation of Father de la Vaissière's "Psychologie Pédagogique" will be for such a means of acquiring valuable knowledge about the earlier stages of the movement both in this country and abroad.

The book is a critical survey of the more important experimental data on the education of the child, adolescent and young man. Its purpose is to assist parents and teachers by presenting the sane, Catholic attitude toward the present-day fervor of experimentation, and to furnish them with an accurate analysis of the principal results obtained during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century.

Those taking up the study of educational psychology for the first time will be benefited by the author's introduction, while those advanced in the field will recognize in it the guiding principles of scholastic philosophy. Readers seeking the traditional stand on educational problems will find a clear and satisfying exposition in the introduction. In this portion of the book there is developed the notion of the true goal of all education, and the need for sound ethics and religious principles as a starting point for pedagogy. The divisions of the subject, the proper scope and purpose of the positive science, its utility, and the right attitude of the teacher toward it are outlined. A historical summary of the present movement, its causes, tendencies and methods is enlightening.

The first part of the book deals with general pedagogy. The natural dispositions brought by the child to the work of education are treated in their general aspect and in detail. Development of interests and attention is considered under the heading of "General Functions". The particular functions of observation, memory, creative imagination, logical thought, language, aesthetic sense, and general intelligence form the matter for a separate section. In the treatment of these functions there is a clear-cut, satisfactory procedure. A discussion of the meaning of the function is followed by a presentation of the methods in experimental use, and a summary and criticism of the results obtained by the experiments.

In the matter of intelligence tests the author shows that he was far ahead of his time in his appreciation of their true value. The voluntary dispositions—the moral and religious sense—constitute an important division from a Catholic viewpoint. It is when treating the will that the author has contributed most to a right understanding and interpretation of the experimental results of educational psychology.

The second part is entitled "Special Pedagogy". Normal subjects are first considered under various aspects. The treat-

ment of co-education will be of interest to American readers. The last part of the book deals with abnormal cases, including the backward, fickle and mixed type. Hysterical and psychasthenic tendencies are discussed. The author displays a profound knowledge of the symptoms, causes and cures of abnormal children. In conclusion there is a brief criticism of the theories expounded by some educators who endeavor to summarize in a single law the development of the child, and five general laws summing up this development are proposed.

Many in America have only recently come to know the works of Father de la Vaissière. The French Jesuit has published two volumes in Latin on Rational Psychology. His best known book in France is the "Psychologie Experimentale", translated into English three years ago by Dr. Raemers. Father de la Vaissière has held the chair of Psychology at the Jesuit House of Studies, Jersey, England, for the past twenty years. To the present work he brought a profound knowledge of scholastic philosophy, many years of study and research in Experimental Psychology, a broad cultural and scientific training, and the fine qualities of an experienced, sympathetic teacher.

The venerable professor of Jersey is an authority on the Continent, and a master of his subject. Every important book and periodical published in Europe and America on education during the past forty years has found its way to his study to be read, digested and appraised at its true value. With the aid of sound principles he has made his way through the interminable maze of pedagogical literature, selecting what is of worth, rejecting what is useless, condemning what is pernicious. His survey of the experimental data of modern pedagogical research up to 1916 should prove useful as a reference book for professors of education. Its use, however, as a text is debatable for two reasons: the vast progress in experimental work since the original was written, and the fact that the book was prepared especially for Continental readers. Those who are interested in the European field will find the book well worth their while for the period it covers.

The book has the distinction of being the first and best of its kind at the time of first publication. By 1926 it had gone through five editions in French, and translations had been made in several languages. Today it stands as the only book in English on educational psychology by a Catholic. The French edition contains a scholarly bibliography of more than 1200 works.

Catholic educators in America will welcome this contribution to the psychology of education by one of the pioneers in the field. It is indeed to be regretted that ill-health has not permitted the author to bring the book thoroughly up-to-date. It is regrettable, too, that the translator did not attempt an adaptation with that end in view, and thus bring the book more in line with the present American trend in educational experiment.

Father de la Vaissière has led the way and spent himself heroically in the work. It remains for others to carry on. The ap-



pearance of his "Educational Psychology" should serve as an inspiration and a model for an up-to-the-minute text-book by an American for Catholic teachers, a need as pressing as it is long-standing.

HENRY CRONIN.

### LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

By A. C. Cotter, S. J., Boston, Stratford, \$2

If a book is to be judged according to the degree of success with which it attains the end it sets itself this book deserves high praise. The author states definitely that brevity, plain and direct presentation, close-knit reasoning, and logical coherence are the aims which he has kept in view throughout. Now it is plain that such a purpose will eliminate all possibility of a deep and exhaustive treatise; and it is further attended by the danger of obscurity and of superficiality. The author has been remarkably successful in avoiding obscurity, and while we can not clear him altogether of superficiality, we may easily excuse it in a book of this nature. To reduce even the fundamentals of Logic and Epistemology to the compass of this small book is somewhat of an achievement.

When we say that the book is clear we do not mean that by reading it one comes to an exhaustive knowledge of the thing explained, but rather that the knowledge gained is satisfactory and not confusing. A good example of clearness is found in the author's treatment of universal ideas. We give it partially. "As a result an idea expresses one thing common to many, *one thing in many*, viz., so that it can be predicated of each of them. Thus that which I conceive when I conceive 'man', is common to Peter, Paul, John, etc., in fact to *all* men, whether past, present, or future. 'Man' therefore is called a *universal* idea." Obviously the teacher would have to enlarge on this, but the explanation is in itself clear and surely not diffuse. One fault against clarity is that the author uses such terms as 'subjective and objective', 'material object and formal object' before he explains just what he means by them. But the teacher, after all, has his function.

Brevity is attained partly by the elimination of everything not directly pertinent to the subject-matter. The origin of ideas, for instance, is passed over because it has to do with Psychology, though the ordinary teacher of Logic would be tempted to delay upon it. A characteristic example of conciseness is found in the proof for the infallibility of the cognitive faculties.

"If there were a faculty which is per se fallible or indifferent, a) that faculty would be no faculty at all, b) there would be no formal certitude at all.

Now the consequent is absurd.

Therefore also the antecedent.

*Proof of major:* a) the very word 'faculty' implies a peculiar nature, a special purpose. b) If one faculty can be per se fallible or indifferent, all can, even the intellectual when judging; but if all faculties are per se fallible or indifferent, then certitude is impossible."

All in all this is an excellent little book and should be very helpful to the beginner in Philosophy.

JOSEPH E. BOLAND

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